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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 303

10 July 1950

SUBJECT: Soviet Capabilities with Respect to Japan in the Light of US
Commitment in Korea

1. The USSR has the military capability of mounting, transporting, and logistically supporting a waterborne attack on Japan with ten to eleven divisions (11,000 men per division). There is in the Far East a sufficient bomber force for large-scale air attack on Japan. It is uncertain, however, whether the surface vessels of the Soviet naval forces in the Far East can give adequate naval support for an amphibious operation against Japan.
2. No effort has been made to estimate Soviet intentions regarding the manner or extent of the employment of those capabilities nor has consideration been given to the requirements of such other Soviet operations as might accompany an assault against Japan. Neither has consideration been given to the extent and effectiveness of probable US counteraction.

DISCUSSION

1. Soviet Forces in the Far East.a. Ground Forces.

The Soviet ground forces in the Far East total 468,000 men, organized in 32 divisions. In addition, there are about 57,000 NVD troops, organized along military lines. The main troop concentrations (16 to 18 divisions) are near ports in the following areas: (1) Vladivostok, (2) Port Arthur-Dairen, (3) Sakhalin, (4) the Kuriles, and (5) Kamchatka-Chukotski Peninsulas. The remaining 12 to 15 divisions are disposed along the Trans-Siberian railroad in garrison areas.

b. Air Forces.

The Soviets are estimated to have disposed in the Far East a total of 5,300 aircraft, assigned to the 9th, 10th, and 12th tactical air armies located in the Far East, Maritime, and Transbaikal Military Divisions; the 3rd long range air army located at Khabarovsk, and the 5th and 7th Pacific Fleet located in the Far East and Maritime MD's. A breakdown of the Soviet air order of battle in the Far East is as follows:

Note: This memorandum has not been coordinated with the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and the Air Force.

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TOP SECRET

Fighter	2,000
Attack	600
Light Bomber	1,400
Bomber (LRAF)	700
Transport	400
Reconnaissance	200
Total	5,300

Although the 3rd long-range air army contains an estimated 1,400 bomber aircraft, no Soviet TU-4's (Soviet B-29's) have been reported operational in any of the regiments. It is possible, however, that some portion of the total number of TU-4's estimated to be currently operational in the USSR may now be in the Far East. It is also possible that all TU-4's available in the USSR could be moved on short notice to bases in the Far East.

The Soviet Air Forces have a variety of bomber-type aircraft in the Far East which are currently operational. The most current air order of battle lists an estimated 944 light bombers assigned to units in the Far East, not including the eighteen regiments of the third long-range air army. It is readily seen, therefore, that there exist in the Far East sufficient bomber aircraft of the Soviet Air Forces to provide the capability for air attack against Japan on a large scale.

c. Naval Forces.

Soviet Naval forces in the Far East are organized into two fleets, the 5th based at Vladivostok and the 7th based at Sovetskaya Gavan. No information concerning the assignment of vessels to fleets in this area has been confirmed.

The ships assigned to the Far East Fleet are as follows:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>
Heavy Cruiser (CA)	2
Light Cruiser (CL)	1
Destroyer (DD)	15
Old Destroyer (ODD)	2
Corvette (DC)	10
Destroyer Escort (DE)	2
Submarine (SS)	79
Minor Combatant Vessels	453
Naval Auxiliaries	29

2. Logistical Capabilities.

a. Capabilities for Waterborne Transport.

The USSR has sufficient logistical capabilities to initiate and support a waterborne attack on Japan with 10 to 11 divisions of 11,000 men per division, including equipment and supplies. The major Soviet-controlled ports in North Korea, the Maritime Province, and Sakhalin have a combined daily loading capacity of at least 55,000 long tons. The ports of Manchuria and North China have an approximately equal capacity. This is more than required to support a force of 10 to 14 divisions.

Japanese ports on the island of Honshu facing the Sea of Japan are of limited capacity, totalling approximately 12,000 tons per day. This is inadequate for the initial attack by 10 to 11 divisions and would force the utilization of ports on Hokaido and the Pacific Coast of Honshu, both of which have ample capacity.

b. Capabilities for Land Transport.

The present stockpile of materiel in the Soviet Far East is estimated to be sufficient for the initial attack, and the capacity of the Trans-Siberian railroads together with this stockpile, is sufficient to maintain an operation of the magnitude previously noted.

c. Capabilities for Air Transport.

The total Soviet airlift capacity immediately available is sufficient to move three airborne brigades using 1,000 LI-2 transport planes. Possibly a maximum of five airborne brigades, if planned in advance, could be moved by means of 1,400 transport planes. This would be possible without gliders but if gliders (K-20) were used, the figures would be increased by one airborne brigade in each case. Without gliders the combat radius is 525 nautical miles--with gliders it would be 400 nautical miles. Each airborne brigade consists of 4,200 men with all equipment except light tanks. There are believed to be 1,000 transport planes in reserve in the USSR for which crews would have to be assembled and conditioning undertaken.